SBE

Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences

A National Science Foundation Directorate

What are the SBE sciences?

The SBE sciences explore human behavior and social organizations. They look at how economic, political, environmental, social, and cultural forces affect the lives of people from birth to old age – and how people in turn shape those forces.

SBE scientists promote the progress of science by developing and employing rigorous methods to discover fundamental principles of human behavior at levels ranging from cells to society and across space and time.

These fundamental principles studies by the SBE sciences help us understand patterns of stability, change, conflict, and cooperation that can be applied to advance the nation's health, prosperity, welfare and to secure the national defense.

In other words, SBE plays a critical role in NSF's mission.

Fay Lomax Cook
NSF Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences

What can I find in the SBE Directorate?

SBE funds a wide range of research programs. Organized into four divisions, these SBE programs support research that cuts across the human experience.

Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences

- Archeology and Archaeometry
- Biological Anthropology
- Cognitive Neuroscience
- Cultural Anthropology
- Developmental Sciences
- Documenting Endangered Languages
- Geography and Spatial Sciences
- Linguistics
- Perception, Action & Cognition
- Science of Learning
- Social Psychology

Social and Economic Sciences

- Decision, Risk and Management Sciences
- Economics
- Law & Social Sciences
- Methodology, Measurement and Statistics
- Political Science
- Science of Organizations
- Science, Technology & Society
- Sociology

Office of Multidisciplinary Activities

- SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowships
- Science of Science and Innovation Policy
- Research Experiences for Undergraduates

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics

- The Nation's leading source of data and information on the U.S. Science and Engineering Enterprise, including statistics on the workforce, educational pathways, research and development funding and performance, and innovation and outcomes

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Cross-disciplinary research

In addition to its own research programs, SBE collaborates with other NSF directorates on cross-disciplinary programs. Social and behavioral scientists bring unique perspectives and ask important questions about the human elements related to topics from biological engineering to computer science.

Cross-directorate, cross-cutting programs include:

NSF's **Understanding the Brain** portfolio seeks to enable scientific understanding of the full complexity of the brain. Activities promise to enhance our ability to predict how interactions between brain function and our physical and social environment enable complex behavior.

Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (**INCLUDES**) works to foster partnerships that broaden participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and scale up proven approaches.

The Cultivating Cultures for Ethical STEM program (**CCE STEM**) funds research projects that identify factors that are efficacious in the formation of ethical Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics researchers in all NSF-supported fields of science and engineering.

The Dynamics of Coupled Natural and Human Systems program (**CNH**) supports interdisciplinary research to examine human- and natural-system processes, and the complex interactions among human and natural systems at diverse scales.

NSF's Smart & Connected Communities (**S&CC**) effort aims to advance understanding of cities and communities to improve their functioning and quality of life through innovations in computing, engineering, information and physical sciences, social, and learning sciences.

The Major Research Instrumentation program (**MRI**) increases access to shared scientific and engineering instruments at higher education institutions, not-for-profit museums, science centers and science and engineering research organizations.

The Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy and Water Systems (**INFEWS**) program focuses on projects that can help determine how society can best provide for a growing demand for food, water and energy while maintaining appropriate ecosystem services.

The Critical Resilient Interdependent Infrastructure Systems and Processes program (**CRISP**) focuses on creating new approaches for the design and operation of critical infrastructure systems that can provide essential services despite natural disasters or other emergencies.

The Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace program (**SaTC**) aims to achieve a truly secure cyberspace by addressing challenging scientific and engineering problems involving many components of a system alongside vulnerabilities that arise from human behaviors and choices.

Cyberinfrastructure Framework for 21st Century Science, Engineering, and Education (**CIF 21**) is a portfolio of activities to provide resources for new research in all science and engineering fields by leveraging ongoing investments and using common approaches and components.

Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases (**EEID**), a joint NSF-National Institutes of Health initiative, supports efforts to understand the ecological and biological mechanisms that govern relationships between human-induced environmental changes and infectious diseases.

Funding opportunities from SBE

SBE provides approximately two-thirds of the federal funding to American colleges and universities for basic research in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences. There are several paths to SBE support.

- **Senior Research Awards**: These grants normally support research for Ph.D.-level investigators. Proposals are evaluated through NSF's merit review process, as outlined in the Proposal Award Policies & Procedures Guide, available online.
- **EAGER**: Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research awards support exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches. This work could be considered especially "high risk-high payoff."
- **GOALI**: Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaisons with Industry.
- **RAPID**: The Grants for Rapid Response Research funding mechanism is used for proposals having severe urgency with regard to availability of or access to data, facilities or specialized equipment, including quick-response research on disasters.
- **RAISE**: Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering.
- **Awards for Conferences, Symposia, and Workshops**: NSF supports conferences, symposia, and workshops in special areas of science and engineering that bring experts together to discuss recent research or share education techniques.
- **Dear Colleague Letters**: These letters provide information about upcoming opportunities or existing programs.
- **CAREER**: Faculty Early Career Development Program awards offer the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars.
- **Special Solicitations**: These encourage the submission of proposals in specific program areas of interest to NSF.
- **Student Support**: Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants (**DDRIG**), Research Experiences for Undergraduates (**REU**), and NSF's Graduate Research Fellowship Program (**GRFP**)